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SB34-20/21: Resolution Encouraging ASUM to Officially Endorse the Mill Levy Increase

Jack Rinck

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The Associated Students of the University of Montana
Resolution Encouraging ASUM to Officially Endorse the Mill Levy Increase
September 30, 2020
SB 34-20/21

Authored by: Jack Rinck, ASUM Senator;
Sponsored by: Justina McDirmid, ASUM Senator; Jonathan Karlen, ASUM Senator;
Taylor Curry, ASUM Senator; Adrianna Medina, Student-at-Large;

Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) is charged with representing and advocating for the interests of the entire University of Montana (UM) student body;

Whereas, ASUM's primary responsibilities include defending, protecting, and upholding the rights and privileges of the students of UM;

Whereas, Transportation is the second highest cost for the average household, only behind housing;

Whereas, According to the American Automobile Association, owning and operating a car for a year costs more than in-state tuition at the UM;

Whereas, Parking on campus is limited; and safe, reliable, frequent public transportation to campus helps save the UM significant capital expenditures associated with building new parking infrastructure;

Whereas, In the upcoming November 2020 election, Missoulians will vote on a Mill Levy to increase property taxes which will go toward funding the Mountain Line public transportation system;

Whereas, The tax increase will fall on those property owners whose assessed property value is \$200,000 or greater;

Whereas, If the Mill Levy passes, Mountain Line will receive over \$3 million per year to expand transit routes and service hours, add weekend bus services, reduce vehicle emissions, purchase more electric buses, and expand paratransit service;

Whereas, As currently funded, Mountain Line provides service on weekdays from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm on a majority of routes and on Saturdays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm;

Whereas, The passage of the Mill Levy would expand Mountain Line's operating capacity to provide service later in the evenings and earlier in the mornings during the week, expand service on Saturday, and provide service on Sunday;

Whereas, The passage of the Mill Levy would guarantee that Mountain Line remains zero-fare meaning it will be free for the public, including University students;

Whereas, Many students rely on public transit, and if the Mill Levy passes, many more students would be able to live without a car and/or otherwise reduce their transportation expenses;

Whereas, Many students work jobs that fall outside of the current service operations of Mountain Line;

Whereas, Expanding service makes it safer for students who need to get home at night, work during the weekend, and/or require paratransit;

Whereas, ASUM Transportation and Mountain Line have maintained a cooperative symbiotic relationship in the past aiming to complement each other's services to provide the most efficient transportation system for students at the University;

Whereas, The benefits from expanding Mountain Line's service would benefit all students and the broader Missoula community;

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That the ASUM formally endorse the upcoming Mill Levy increase as seen on the November 3rd, 2020 election day ballot;

Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That the Mountain Line Transit System and the Friends of Mountain Line Organization be allowed to add the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) and the ASUM Logo to their endorsement list;

Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM encourages students to vote in the November 2020 election for the Mill Levy increase;

Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be sent to: Amy Cilimburg, Treasurer for Friends of Mountain Line; Madeleine Jones, ASUM Sustainability Coordinator; Jordan Hess, ASUM Director of Transportation.

Passed by Committee: _____, 2020

Passed by ASUM Senate: October 7, 2020

Noah Durnell,
Chair of the Relations and Affairs Committee

Patrick James Flanagan,
Chair of the Senate